

### **Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method for introducing and stabilizing heterologous and recombinant genes in a thermophilic host comprising the steps of:  
~~one of inactivating and or deleting a characteristic gene defining a detectable host characteristic growth rate from said thermophilic host, resulting in a modified thermophilic host expressing an absence of said detectable host characteristic having a reduced growth rate; and~~  
~~inserting a DNA fragment of interest into said modified thermophilic host together with an intact said characteristic gene, whereby said detectable host characteristic host growth rate defined by said characteristic gene is restored to said thermophilic host thereby enabling one of detection and or confirmation of successful transformation using plasmid vectors and or integration of said DNA fragment into a chromosome of said thermophilic host.~~
  
2. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said characteristic gene is a malate dehydrogenase gene.

3. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said thermophilic host is a *Thermus* sp.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein said thermophilic host is *Thermus thermophilus*.

Claims 6-9 (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) In a *Thermus* strain comprising ~~one of~~ an inactivated ~~and or~~ deleted characteristic gene defining a ~~detectable host characteristic~~ ~~strain growth rate~~, a method for producing biotechnology products comprising the steps of:

~~transforming said Thermus strain with cloning a gene of interest into at least one convenient multiple cloning site of a plasmid or integration vector comprising an intact said characteristic gene, said plasmid or integration vector comprising at least one strong Thermus promoter and said at least one convenient multiple cloning site, whereby expression of any gene of interest is enabled;~~

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~~cloning a gene of interest into said at least one multiple cloning site~~  
transforming said *Thermus* strain with said plasmid or integration vector; and  
expressing said gene of interest in said *Thermus* strain using said **strong**  
*Thermus* promoter.

11. (Original) A method in accordance with Claim 10, wherein said characteristic gene is a malate dehydrogenase gene.

Claims 12-14 (Canceled)